

are worked out with candour and clearness and with a freedom from the partizan prejudice which deforms some Indian works on Economics ; it is a pleasure to take up a book written in the Punjab which contains no reference to the communal feuds which distract the province. But Prof. Brij Narain deals roundly with his own people when in his opinion their social institutions work economic harm to the country. Upon the universality of marriage in India he grimly remarks, "Unfortunately, marriage is regarded as a religious duty in India and the age of marriage is low. A Hindu must marry and have a son, or he cannot go to Heaven. It is doubtful if every Hindu goes to Heaven ; it is certain that many a Hindu lives in Hell on Earth. The leaders of the orthodox school, who are opposed to every reform not countenanced by religion, do not realise the extent of the suffering caused by the universality of marriage and the early age of marriage."

THEODORE MORISON.

Schiller, Ferdinand Canning Scott, M.A., D.Sc., etc. *Eugenics and Politics*. Constable & Co., London. 1926. Pp. x+220. Price 78s. 6d.

If it is possible to influence opinion in favour of Eugenic reform this temperate and persuasive book ought to serve that purpose. Dr. Schiller explains the danger of our present situation, with the low development of the average population, and how it has come about, discusses the remedy, and replies conclusively to the popular objections to eugenic proposals. We are concerned with the fall of Man and how he is to be saved. Perhaps the species is no longer at its best : there may have been some progress in degeneration. Before the beginning of history natural selection (as it determines animal species) ceased to be effective with us : not that selection ceased ; but the selective environment was no longer the physical but, in ever increasing measure, the social : customs, institutions, opinions, tastes, encouraged some men and discouraged others in such ways as not to raise but rather to lower the average of intelligence and character. Society depends upon leaders : genetic variability produces great leaders—and "morons" : leaders do all the difficult thinking and directing, and less brains are enough for their average followers. Behold the chief source of all our troubles. As organization grows more complex, the average man can survive with less variety of activity. Division of labour increases wealth ; and, without directly stunting the individual, it provides quarters in which the stunted individual can live ; until, at last, there are tasks at which even "morons" can earn their bread and marry. The triumph of civilization ! An age of economic "progress" is directly degenerative by enabling more and more people to live who, in harder times, would never have been born. During the last 150 years the population, first of Britain, then of Europe, America and India has expanded at a rate without precedent ; and there must have been a great fall of average capacity. No doubt, a rise in the standard of living disguises the effects of the fall, but whether in any way it can counteract it is uncertain.

But, says Dr. Schiller, the fate of a Society is in its own power—if it desires to improve its citizens and understands the conditions.

Antiquated institutions with their honours and emoluments encourage antiquated human values: they might be reformed and their perquisites distributed amongst more desirable types. General taste in the employment of leisure overpays the practitioners of frivolous accomplishments; it might be turned to important social advantage. Our marriages are controlled by a caste system "which prescribes, in general terms, whom it is proper and possible to marry, and whom not"; if, instead of such regulation, there prevailed a wholesome eugenic sentiment, it would be generally accepted with better results.

All these things depend upon the spread of enlightened beliefs concerning man's duty "to remake himself." Dr. Schiller disclaims a coercive policy; and coercion, even if desirable, is impossible without a great change of opinion and feeling. Accordingly, he calls for an era of reflection. How to make the bulk of people reflect? Biology as a subject of study in all schools would prepare the ground. If another Cobbett could be convinced of sound doctrine, he might do much to propagate it through many social levels. As it is, eugenic ideas, conceived within a somewhat narrow circle, meet with difficulty in diffusing beyond it. How to "get it across?" A wonderful inertia stabilises the general mind. Even students of science, for the most part, take little interest in practical affairs. Fierce jealousy of superiority on the part of sufferers from the opposite "complex" resents the notion that anything better can exist or is desirable. And consider their numbers. Possibly our task is too hard. Of all parts of the world New Zealand is best situated for eugenic experiment.

The appeal to private persons in respect of their own families may sometimes prove too much. The abler should have larger families and the rest smaller; and to most of those who toil and groan it may be emphatically and truthfully said: "With a smaller family you can raise your standard of life physical and cultural; feed, clothe and educate better the children you do have, and enjoy more consideration in the world." But a professional man of high ability overhears this; and, unless he is exceptionally well-to-do, sees that it applies to his own case. Turning to him, however, one points out that, in the interest of his country and posterity, he should increase his family. "What! and commit them to narrow circumstances, lower culture and loss of consideration." It cannot be said that his attitude is culpably selfish or ignoble.

The opposition between family interest and patriotism or race-enthusiasm would, no doubt, be lessened or overcome if powerful eugenic sentiments dominated the community. A deserving family would not be allowed to suffer for its devotion to the public good. We are thus brought back to the need of propaganda. Dr. Schiller gives a delightful example of one way in which this may be carried out in his 5th chapter—*Plato and Eugenics*. Seeing how desirable it is to have the opinion of the Father of Eugenics on our present affairs, Dr. Schiller resolved to seek an interview with him. By a "gigantic effort of will" (how aided by Bacchantic or Buddhistic rites we are not told) he attained a state of ecstasy, in which he entered the sphere of Plato's present existence, and held a dialogue with him which should be added to the next issue of Jowett's translation. We are glad to find that the

Master's style has not greatly deteriorated (like that of other heroes who have passed on), whilst his sense of fair-play in dialectic (perhaps from having learnt cricket) and, above all, his common sense have vastly improved. Hence his proposals are modest: endowments of £200 a year [not enough] for 10 years to the most excellent young folk [dons, I take it, of the older universities], if they marry between 20 and 30, with further allowance for each child; marriage licenses refused to the unfit; in those issued to lower grades insert the number of children allowed—not to mention "social surgery." But his advice (Plato hints) is academic; and that, alas! has little momentum outside the academy.

CARVETH READ.